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Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 8 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit a joint statement from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Kuwait (see annex), dated 26 July 2016, regarding the repeated transgression of Iranian military boats of the waters of the submerged area between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Kuwait.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 74 (a).

(*Signed*) Abdallah Y. **Al-Mouallimi**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 8 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

26 July 2016

The Permanent Missions of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to the United Nations present their compliments to the Secretary-General and have the honour to inform him that Iranian military vessels have carried out repeated acts of aggression and trespass into the waters of the submerged zone adjacent to the divided zone between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (the submerged divided zone), over which those two States have exclusive sovereign rights to explore and exploit natural resources. Recently, two such violations were committed. The first was by a support vessel and two speed boats flying the Iranian flag, each with three armed personnel aboard, at 1335 hours on Wednesday, 20 April 2016. The second was by an Iranian Hendijan-class support vessel (Hendijan 1401) at 0732 hours on Thursday, 21 April 2016. Both vessels and the two speed boats approached Durrah well No. 3 (D3) in the Durrah oilfield (coordinates 28°58'36" N 49°06'16" E) in the Saudi Arabian-Kuwaiti submerged divided zone. Such actions could lead to confrontations endangering peace and security in the region.

It is well known that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have exclusive sovereign rights to explore and exploit hydrocarbon resources in the Durrah field and the submerged divided zone.

The Governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait strongly protest and deplore these repeated acts of aggression and trespass, and demand that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran put an end to them. They make that demand with a view to preserving their interests, ensuring respect for their rights in the area and maintaining security and stability there.

The two Governments have asked the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for negotiations to delimit the maritime boundary between the submerged divided zone and the waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran in accordance with international law. However, despite repeated appeals, the Governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have yet to receive a response from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to their calls for negotiations to delimit that maritime boundary.

The Permanent Missions of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait request that this letter should be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and published in the next Law of the Sea Bulletin.

(*Signed*) Abdallah Y. **Al-Mouallimi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia

(*Signed*) Mansour Ayyad SH A **Alotaibi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Kuwait